

\$4,500, which remained unliquidated when the revenues and assets of that Board passed into the hands of the present Board upon its organization. This state of the finances may be thus accounted for. Although the local tax authorized by the County law, (still in force in that particular,) was twenty cents on the \$100 of the assessable property of the County, the rate levied for the current year, under that law, was but twelve cents on the \$100, this being all that the County Board asked for at the time the County Commissioners were making out their levy list in June last, before the present Board was organized. This moderate demand was doubtless made by the old Board with a view to lessen the local tax as much as possible, so that the introduction of the State tax might be less perceptibly felt, and less objectionable to the people. But this has proved to be a mistaken policy, as their floating debt was thereby left unprovided for; whereas, if the whole twenty cents, authorized by the local law had been asked for, there would have come to the hands of the present Board some \$6,350, more than can be received under the rate actually levied—a sum not only sufficient to pay off the debt of \$4,500, but leaving a margin of some \$1,850 for the thousand and one contingencies that in the administration of such a system as this are continually arising.

The suspension of the Schools, at this critical period, would seem to be a very hazardous and unwise proceeding, and the Board, at its adjourned meeting on the 2d of January next, will, I doubt not, determine to continue the floating debt, and prepare to meet it by a call for the full twenty cents on the \$100, under the local law, in the levy of 1866.

Whenever the floating debt is removed, if the local tax is continued or left unrepealed, as in our judgment it should be, unless its repeal be called for by the people of the County themselves, the resources of the Board will, I think, be equal to the demands upon them, with such local aid in the erection and furnishing of houses as a proper and judicious presentation of the subject will secure. If, however, the local tax is repealed, and the singular provision in the Constitution forbidding the passing of any law providing a local tax is enforced, the State tax must necessarily be increased, and largely increased, or the system must fail.

In reference to the *seventh* and last *topic* suggested in your communication, viz: the opinion entertained of the School law by our Board; our experience as to its practical workings, and the additions, alterations or amendments that are deemed advisable, I would remark, that the modifications of the law, suggested at the State Convention of School Commissioners in August last, and entrusted to a committee who will doubtless report at the adjourned meeting of that Convention, or Association, on the 17th proximo, in a great degree, if not entirely, coincided with our views.

The practical workings of the State system is so similar to that of the local system previously in operation, that its introduction was exceedingly easy; and we believe it to be well adapted to the wants of our people. The increased number of Schools under the care of